



*11th Legislative District*

# Session Update 2001

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Dear Neighbors,

This session has been the hardest one for me in my nine years representing you in Olympia. We accomplished several things this year despite a 49-49 tie in the House between Democrats and Republicans. In particular, we were able to make improvements in our foster care system and prevented serious cuts in many social service programs such as adult day care programs, vision and dental care.

However, my biggest disappointment is the lack of a transportation package. My Democratic colleagues and I worked hard to put together a transportation package that would have allowed for less congestion on the freeways, and a better transit and ferry system. It would be better if we could all travel safely, get to work on time, and spend more time with our families.

I hope you find this newsletter helpful. Inside you will find information on some of the highlights from this past session.

If you have any questions about these or any other issues, please do not hesitate to contact me or my legislative aide, Tatsuo Nakata.

Thank you again for the honor and privilege of serving as your representative. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rep. Velma Veloria



## Education

Following the mandate given to us by voters in **Initiative 728**, the legislature approved a **\$393 million** package that will reduce class sizes. It will also provide funding to extend learning opportunities, professional development, early childhood programs and building improvements or additions that will further support a reduction in class sizes.

In response to **Initiative 732** the legislature also approved **\$318 million** in cost-of-living increases (3.7 percent for the school year 2001-2002) for K-12 state-funded staff. We extended the same cost-of-living increase for other state employees as well.

We also passed legislation that directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to review the criteria to determine the point at which limited English proficient students are required to take the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (**HB 2025**); creates alternative routes to teacher certification (**HB 1607**); and enhances teacher preparation and mentoring (**HB 2066**).

In higher education, the legislature provided additional money for scholarships and increased enrollment at state colleges and universities.

## Sex Offenders

Washington state residents are rightly concerned with where **sex offenders** are placed after they are released from prison. Our district has had to deal with this issue first hand. To ensure that there are adequate resources to deal with any potential problems that may arise, **SB 6151** sets up certain **standards** for determining where halfway houses can be established. These factors include:

- Law Enforcement Response Time,
- Proximity to Schools, Day Care, Parks, etc.,
- Security Systems,
- Staffing,
- Supervision of residents when in the community,
- Access to treatment services and employment for residents,

- Public Notice and hearings prior to operating a facility,
- Compliance with sex offender registration requirements already in law, and
- A comprehensive system for reporting and responding to violations of a person's conditions of release.

The legislation establishes a **joint select committee** – made up of legislators, cities, counties, DSHS, law enforcement and victims' advocates — to make recommendations about how to distribute and operate halfway houses throughout the state, and what relief communities may receive.

## Economic Development

First established in 1993, the **Linked Deposit Program** increases access to loans for **minority- and women-owned businesses**. Under this program, the treasurer deposits surplus state funds in banks as a certificate of deposit on the condition that the particular bank make qualifying loans under the program. "Qualifying loans" are loans that are made to minority or women's business enterprises that are defined as small businesses at an interest rate that is at least two percentage points below the market rate. We passed legislation that extends this program for another three years. **For more information, contact the Office of Minority & Women Business Enterprises at (360) 753-9693.**

We allocated approximately **\$1 million** to the **Office of Community, Trade and Economic Development** to help with business finance and loan programs, a quick sites initiative program, a business information hotline, travel expenses associated with OTED's provision of outreach and technical assistance services to businesses and local economic development associations and information technology enhancements.

Given the recent energy crisis, the legislature also provided millions of dollars of energy assistance to low-income families. For more information contact the **Office of Community and Economic Development at (360) 586-0495.**



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## Tribal Cigarette Tax Compacts

**HB 1201** authorizes Governor Locke to enter into agreements concerning the sale of cigarettes with area tribes. These agreements will provide a means to promote economic development, provide needed revenues for tribal governments, and enhance enforcement of the state's cigarette tax, which will save the state money and reduce conflict.

## CAPITAL BUDGET

This year's capital budget offered support for several projects of interest to residents in the 11th Legislative District. The budget included funds for **Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent**, the **Seattle Chinese Gardens**, the **Museum of Flight**, a **Filipino Community Cultural and Multi-service Center**, and the **IKEA Performing Arts Center**:

**Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent (THOR)** - Affordable housing for all of our residents continues to be a top priority in Seattle and a top priority for Democrats in Olympia. Hoping to address this concern, the legislature appropriated more funds of the state's Housing Trust Fund. The Office of Community Development (OCD) recently awarded transitional housing funds through the King County Department of Community and Human Services to subsidize rental housing for homeless families with children in our district who earn less than 50 percent of the area median income. These families will receive housing assistance and case management services for up to two years. Participating families are required to develop goals and take appropriate action toward achieving permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

**Filipino Community of Seattle** - Provides state assistance for the development and construction of the Filipino Community Cultural and Multi-service Center in Seattle. The money must be matched in additional contributions toward the project from local government.

**Seattle Chinese Gardens** - This is a state contribution towards development and construction of a



*The famous River Viewing Tower, Wangjiang Lou, is the model for the Seattle Chinese Garden's Floating Clouds Pavilion. (Courtesy: Seattle Chinese Garden Society).*

classical Chinese garden in Seattle. The money must be matched by \$200,000 from local government.

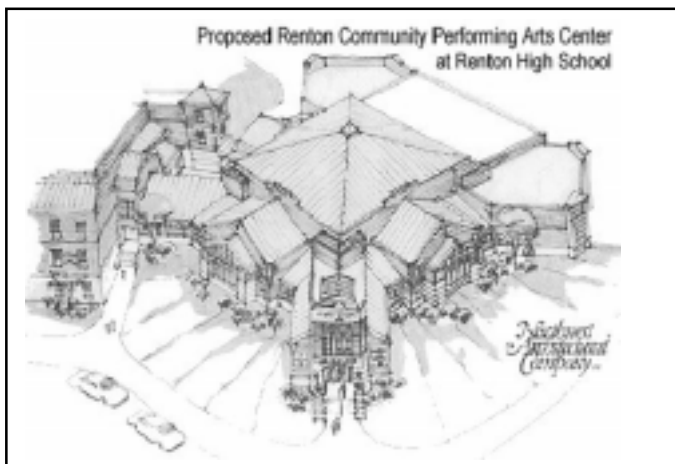
**Museum of Flight** - During the next four years, the Museum of Flight intends to build a new center for its rapidly expanding aviation and space archives. Growth of the archives is forcing expansion. In the process, the museum will be able to better protect materials, increase public access, and create room for growth. In the first phase, the museum is provided funding for activities such as building design, permitting, and temporary storage of archival material. State funds may not be used for demolition.



*(Courtesy: Museum of Flight)*

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**IKEA Performing Arts Center** - The Renton Community IKEA Performing Arts Center project is a collaborative community effort to upgrade a planned new auditorium at Renton High School to a 550-seat shared-use state-of-the-art performing arts center.



**An Artist's rendering of the soon-to-be-built IKEA Performing Arts Center (Courtesy: City of Renton & Northwest Architectural Company).**

The state provided funds to leverage the school district's commitment of **\$3,326,141** for a new auditorium with the community's commitment to raise an additional **\$1.5 million**. The upgrades include: an ex-

panded shop, theatre manager's office, ticket booth, bathroom facilities and a separate storage area for community users, additional seating, parking spaces, lobby space, set production area, dressing room and green room, upgraded acoustic shell, sound system, theatre lights, stage rigging and curtains.

## Still to Come:

My greatest disappointment this session was not having the opportunity to vote for a Transportation Package that would have allowed us to get to work on time, travel safer, and spend more time with our families. I am still committed to working on this issue in the next session.

I am also committed to ensuring that the legislature revisits other legislation next year including legislation on **racial profiling**, an **anti-bullying bill**, legislation to facilitate **parental and community involvement** in our schools, **legislation to make tribes eligible for community economic revitalization board funding** and legislation to **increase the wages and enhance the benefits** of long term care paraprofessional workers.

We might also try and revive **HB 1795**, which would remove a \$10,000 upper limit on the amount an agency is to pay to a displaced farm, nonprofit organization, or small business if it is condemned by the state and is forced to relocate.

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